

THE ANNUAL REPORT
OF
The Medical Officer of Health
FOR THE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL
OF AMBLE FOR THE YEAR 1919
AND
THE ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
Sanitary Inspector
FOR THE URBAN DISTRICT OF
AMBLE FOR THE YEAR 1919,



MCINNES PRINTER AMBLE.



THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE URBAN DISTRICT OF AMBLE
FOR THE YEAR 1919.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE AMBLE
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,—

You will notice in the report that there is an increase in the birth rate and a very great decrease in the death rate in 1919 from the previous year. The death rate is less than half of that of 1918, and is the lowest for Amble in my recollection. The infantile mortality is very low, being almost half of the previous year's death rate. You will also find in the report that, for the eighth year in succession there has been no death in the Urban area from epidemic diarrhœa.

I am sure ~~that~~ ^{that} you will consider these figures are eminently satisfactory, showing, as they do, that your Urban District is in a very healthy and sanitary condition, and that it compares very favourably with similar towns in England

NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

Amble is a seaport town, situated in the angle between the estuary of the river Coquet and the North Sea. The Urban District, consisting of 1220 acres of land and inland water, is flat and low-lying and has few trees. It is therefore greatly exposed, especially to easterly winds. The town is built of stone from local quarries. The population of 4883, at the census of 1911, was estimated at 4500 in 1919.

Most of the men are employed as coal miners at the adjacent collieries of Newburgh and Broomhill, which are distant $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles and 3 miles respectively from Amble,

There are a few fishermen.

Coal is shipped at Warkworth Harbour, the local port.

AMOUNT OF POOR LAW RELIEF.

The total amount of outdoor relief expended in the Urban district for the year ending 31st. December 1919 was £816-8-7.

BIRTH RATE,

The number of deaths registered during the year was 102- 50 boys and 52 girls,- an increase of 25 over 1918,

The birth rate for the year calculated on a population of 4737 (birth rate population) was 21.53 per 1000, of these births two were illegitimate, a decrease of 7 from the past year and 1.96 per cent of the births registered.

The birth rate for England and Wales (provisional figure) for 1919 was 18.5 per 1000.

MORTALITY.

During the year 40 deaths were registered in the Urban District. Inward transferable deaths numbered six, outward transferable deaths two, The total net deaths belonging to the district were therefore 44.

They occurred ^r_L throughout the year as follows:-

January	5	May	5	September	4
February	5	June	4	October	4
March	3	July	-	November	2
April	5	August	5	December	2

These deaths included 22 males and 22 females.

The death rate, corrected for differences of sex and age constitution and based upon the "death rate" population (which excludes all non-civilian males whether serving at home or abroad), was 9.67 per 1000,

As all the public health legislation for the past years has had for its object a healthier community, and since this goes *pari passu* with a decreasing death rate, then I think the Urban District as a whole may be considered as being in a very fortunate and enviable condition.

ANALYSIS OF THE DEATH RATE.

The ages at death were as follows:-

Under 1 year, 6; 1 and under 2 years, 1; 2 and under 5 yrs, 3; 5 and under 15 yrs., 2; 15 and under 25 yrs, 2; 25 and under 45 yrs., 7; 45 and under 65 yrs., 10; 65 and upwards, 13.

Zymotic disease caused 7 deaths; Cancer, 7; Pulmonary disease, 8 (including Tuberculosis 3); Organic heart disease 4; Violence 2; etc.

INFANT MORTALITY (under 1 year).

Infant deaths under 1 year numbered 6, one less than last year, giving a death rate of 58.82 per 1000 births registered. This compares favourably with the infant death rate (provisional figures) for England and Wales, during the same period, of 89.00 per 1000.

In the report of the Medical Officer to the Local Government Board for 1917-18, the following passage occurs " Possible minimum of Infant mortality-The history of 1917 and of preceding years is showing that we may anticipate a reduction of the national rate of infant mortality to 50 per 1000 births.

The following rates for Amble are illustrative:-
 1916--59.4; 1917--62.5; 1918--90.9; 1919--58.2. Of these six deaths, four were due to congenital debility, one to whooping cough and one to an ill defined cause. For the eighth year in succession there has not been a death from epidemic diarrhœa, a tribute to the effective sanitary condition of the district.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

During the year 118 cases of infectious disease were notified, an increase of 65 cases over 1918 due to measles being epidemic.

They were as follows:-

Measles	100	Encephalitis Lethargica	1
Diphtheria	7	Pulmonary Tuberculosis	2
Erysipelas	3	Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1
Pneumonia	2	Scarlet Fever	2

Measles were epidemic from August to the beginning of December. There was one death due to complication with meningitis. There was no school closure.

The fatal case of diphtheria occurred in a child of 2 years. The other cases of this disease were of a milder type. Three occurred in the same street, two of these in houses having a common yard. This yard contained a defective privy midden in a bad sanitary condition. A notice to have it converted into a W. C. was served on the owner at the end of the year. There is no doubt that these cases originated in this yard and that the third case had been in contact with one or other of them. The remaining houses were in a sanitary condition. The Erysipelas cases were idiopathic. The solitary case of Encephalitis Lethargica aged 4 years, proved fatal. One case of Scarlet Fever occurred in June and one in August, They were strictly isolated and no further cases were reported.

Mumps and whooping cough were epidemic throughout the year.

Patients with infectious disease are isolated in their own homes as strictly as possible. It is gratifying to find that parents and guardians are becoming more widely educated to the necessity of preventing the spread of infection not merely to the other members of the household, but also to the outside public. Disinfectants are supplied free by the Council and are freely used in these cases. It is not uncommon now in those houses where a patient can be isolated in separate room, to find a sheet impregnated with disinfecting fluid and kept moist, hanging in the doorway. In cases of diphtheria and scarlet fever, the mother, or other relative in attendance on the child, is trained to have basins of diluted disinfectant fluid in the room near the patient. In one basin, cups, spoons etc, are immersed immediately after being used by the patient, for half an hour before being washed while in the other basin the attendant's hands are rinsed before attending to the other children in the home. When these cases are free from infection the house is disinfected by the Inspector.

SMALL-POX. No primary vaccinations and re-vaccinations were performed by the Medical Officer of Health under the Public Health (Small-pox-prevention) Regulations, 1917.

Vaccination in this district has practically fallen into abeyance, as the great majority of the parents avail themselves of the conscientious objection clause.

TUBERCULOSIS. No action was necessary to enforce the regulations and secure prompt notification, as the requirements as to notification were observed.

TUBERCULOSIS.

During 1919, three deaths, 1 male and 2 females, resulted from Pulmonary Tuberculosis as compared with four for the preceding year.

One death occurred in an institution situated without the area.

Two cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis were notified during the year, one of which proved fatal.

No cases of other forms of Tuberculosis were notified. Disinfectants were supplied by the Council to such cases as desired them.

M HOUSING ACCOMMODATION.

There was a deficiency of houses for the needs of the population towards the end of 1919.

Speculative building was at a standstill due, not only to the high and increasing price of material and labour whereby a fair return on the outlay was improbable, but also in a great part to the costly type of house required in the Housing Act,

As a result no new houses were erected during 1919

A survey of the Urban District was made in the latter half of the year and laid before the Council by the Surveyor at the October meeting.

It contained the following facts relative to the housing in the Urban District :-

" The number of houses in the district which were in separate occupation was 1035, the number occupied by two families 16, Total number of occupied houses 1051.

Of these houses 223 were occupied by their owners, 94 houses were provided with bathrooms, 398 with water closets 442 with ash closets and 25 with privies,

The total number of houses in separate occupation at the Census of 1911 was 1084, indicating that in 1919 there were 33 separate occupiers less than in 1911.

This decrease was accounted for by the number of houses compulsorily closed by the Council, by the conversion of houses of one and two rooms into houses of two and four rooms and by a number of houses having been converted into business premises. During 1919 three houses of two rooms each, were made into business premises.

The population has decreased from 4883 in 1911 (Census) to 4416. There were 1691 adult males, 1797 adult females with 413 boys and 515 girls under ten years. There were:-

Houses	Rooms	Occupiers	Average per house
81	1	230	2.8
271	2	1100	4.05
324	3	1445	4.4
165	4	676	4.08
210	5 & over	967	4.6

The houses which had more than two persons to a room numbered 184. In 1911 the number was 243. The total number of occupiers in these 184 houses was 1156.

In 79 of these houses the excess over two persons to a room was only 1 person per house; in 53 houses it was 2 persons; in 30 it was 3 persons; in 15 it was 4 persons; in 5 it was 5 persons; and in 2 houses it was 6 persons.

This gave a proportionate per centage to the population of 26.1, whereas in 1911 the percentage was 32.6.

With regard to the 16 houses which were occupied by more than one family, there were only 4 houses in which there were more than 2 persons to a room.

Some areas were detailed to show the extent of any overcrowding in Amble as under :-

	Houses	Rooms	Persons	Average
Broomhill Street	14	3 each	102	7.2 perhouse
Cement Houses	6	2	35	5.8
Victoria Street	16	2	32	5.3
Acklington Street	18	3	84	4.6
Scott Street	18	3	84	4.6
Gordon Street	28	2	125	4.4
Dovecot Street	5	3	22	4.4
Henderson Street	29	2	113	3.8

WATER SUPPLY.

The water supply during 1919 has been of the usual good quality and on the whole abundant in quantity. Owing to the extremely dry summer the level at Morwick reservoir was lower than usual, It was necessary to take precautions against undue waste and the supply was always constant.

The analysis of the water, with the analyst's report is as follows :-

	1913.	1909.
"Total solid matter in solution dried at 212 degs. F.	24.500	22.960
Chlorine existing as chlorides	1.539	2.336
Ammonia	0.012	0.010
Albuminoid Ammonia	0.002	0.003
Nitrogen existing as nitrates	0.013	0.003
Oxygen absorbed in 15 minutes at 80 degs F.	non determined	do.
Oxygen absorbed in 4 minutes at 80 degs F.	0.014	0.012

Lead and other poisonous metals	none	none
Hardness before boiling	not determined	ditto
Hardness after boiling	ditto	ditto
Appearance in 2 ft. tube	brownish turbidity	
Smell when heated to 100 degs. F.	none	none
Microscopical exam. of sediment	satisfactory	satisfactory

This water will be rather hard, though not to an objectionable extent. Organically it is a fairly pure water, and it is in our opinion suitable for drinking and general domestic use. The sample contained in suspension nearly a tenth of a grain, per gallon, of iron hydroxide, and it is chiefly if not entirely, this to which the turbidity of the water is due".

THE MILK SUPPLY.

The milk supplied to the town was of the usual good quality. The supply is obtained from four dairies, two of which are outside and two within the Urban District.

All the cowsheds have impervious floors, were well drained, lighted and ventilated. They were kept clean and whitewashed regularly, and all had a good water supply,

OTHER FOODS.

The general food supply to the town was satisfactory. The premises where food was prepared and sold were kept in a good condition. The carcase of a cow on examination was found to have advanced tuberculosis of the pleura, peritoneum and glands. It was reported by the butcher at once after slaughtering and was not exposed for sale. Two carcasses of imported mutton were found unsound during the year

All these were destroyed. There is no public abattoir in the town.

No prosecution took place under the Food and Drugs Act.

BAKEHOUSES AND MINERAL WATER MANUFACTORIES,

Two mineral water manufactories and one bakehouse were in the town.

When inspected they were always found in a clean and satisfactory condition.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

There were three slaughter houses in Amble in 1919.

They were regularly inspected and were kept in very good order.

SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.

The water carriage of sewerage in the town discharges its sewage by a main outfall sewer into the harbour, and by a small outfall sewer into the tidal gut. It was satisfactory during the year.

NUISANCES.

Seventy six sanitary defects were found for which 65 informal notices were served. As a result 64 were abated. A tabular list will be found in the appendix.

REFUSE DISPOSAL & SCAVENGING.

Two privy middens of the double Type were abolished and replaced by four water closets.

There were therefore in the district at the end of the year :-

Fresh water closets	398
Ash closets	442
Privy middens	25

The scavenging was carried out as usual by the Council's employees in a very satisfactory manner. The excretal and dry refuse was removed bi-weekly.

RIVERS' POLLUTION,

The insanitary condition of the Amble gut, a tidal gut emptying into the river Coquet, which has been pointed out in previous reports, still remained unabated.

LODGING HOUSES.

One lodging house is registered in the district. It has been found clean and tidy at each inspection. No cases of infectious disease occurred in it.

SCHOOLS.

There are five elementary schools in the Urban District. All are in a sanitary condition with an efficient supply of water.

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION OF THE DISTRICT.

1. Work of Sanitary officials:-

- (a) The report of the Surveyor for the year 1919 is appended.
- (b) The report of the Inspector of Nuisances for the year 1919 is appended.

2. Hospital Administration:-

The hospital accommodation in Amble consists of one isolation hospital situated on the Links. It is an iron building and has four beds. It was erected for the reception of small pox patients.

The hospital was in good condition and was regularly inspected and aired.

No hospital exists for other infectious diseases.

3. Administration of Local and General Adoptive Acts:-

The following acts have been adopted by the Council:-

Private Street Works Act.

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890, Parts 1 & 3.

Infectious Disease (Prevention) Act, 1890.

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907.

No local acts have been adopted.

4. Chemical and Bacteriological Work.

In cases of infectious disease, where necessary, preparations are examined for the Council, at the Durham University College of Medicine Laboratory, Newcastle upon Tyne. This opportunity is afforded to all doctors practising in the district, and is taken full advantage of by them. Diphtheria antitoxin is stocked by the M. O. H. for the Urban Council. and is supplied free to practitioners or use in cases which require it.

PORT SANITATION.

The vessels arriving at Warkworth Harbour were regularly inspected during the year.

In 1919, 219 vessels arrived in the harbour, with a total registered tonnage of 70,775 tons.

The smallest vessel had a registered tonnage of 36 tons and the largest 804 tons.

No imports were brought to Amble by them, and they obtained cargoes of coal, the town's only export.

All cases of illness on board were promptly reported and at once investigated. No cases of infectious disease were found.

With the regard to the present facilities for preventing the importing and spread of disease, the town has an hospital which can be opened for the reception of small pox cases.

Influenza cases, if they are too ill to be treated on board, are sent to the Alnwick Union Hospital. Where infectious disease is discovered on board a ship, the crew are not allowed ashore until the ship and they are free from infection. Ships in quarantine have a station allotted to them,

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS,

There are 11 factories and 27 workshops in the district. Ten children and young persons were examined during the year and none were rejected.

The various premises were kept in a sanitary condition. No written notices were required and no prosecutions were instituted. No nuisances required abatement and there were no offences under the Factory and Workshops Act.

The following are the registered workshops :-

Dressmaking and Millinery	5
Tailoring	3
Bakehouses	1
Trades such as Blacksmiths	
Plumbers, Joiners &c.	18

I am glad that I am able to lay before you such a favourable report on the health of Amble during 1919. The greatly reduced death rates both of adults and infants, is a big step in the right direction. I remember when I came here, Diphtheria was practically endemic; now we have only a few cases in the year. Enteric Fever is unknown in the district. For this we have to thank our plentiful supply of pure water and the excellent sanitation of the town.

I take this opportunity of thanking you for the consideration and courtesy you have shown me since I returned to take up the duties of medical officer of health to your council. My thanks are also due to Mr. Burton, your Surveyor and Inspector of Nuisances, for the very able way in which he has attended to the sanitation of the town during the year and for the valuable help he has always so willingly afforded me.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

James Anderson Loughridge.

THE ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
SANITARY INSPECTOR

For the Urban District of Amble,
for the Year 1919.

To J. A. LOUGHRIDGE, M.B. Ch.B.

Dear Sir,

I beg to present my Report of the Sanitary Administration of the Amble Urban District for the year 1919, together with the tabular statements required.

HOUSING.

With the improved conditions as to labour and materials considerable repairs to property have been carried out during the year, but the owners are still very reluctant to improve their property owing to the increased cost of materials and labour, and at the end of the year, the necessary repairs to a number of houses had not been carried out.

Considerable improvements was effected to the house No. 17, High street, where a new floor was laid, new sash windows were substituted for fixed windows, the walls were replastered, a new pantry provided and other general repairs executed.

Albert House cottage was also very much improved; the walls were replastered with cement and pudlo to avoid dampness, a portion of the roof was reslated, a new pantry was provided and other necessary repairs effected.

Apart from the general repair of a number of houses, the housing conditions have not been improved during the year.

No new houses have been built and three houses of two rooms each have been converted into business premises.

During October a survey of the housing conditions was carried out and it was found that there were sixteen houses which were occupied by more than one family, but of this number there were only four houses in which there were more than two persons to a room. At the time of survey there were about thirty empty houses at Radcliffe, just outside the Urban District boundary, and arrangements were proceeding at the end of the year to relieve the overcrowding in Amble by inducing a number of miners to remove to Radcliffe.

The Council have had under consideration the erection of houses under the Act of 1919 but at the end of the year they had not submitted a scheme to the Ministry Health.

SANITARY CONVENIENCES & DRAINAGE.

Two privy middens of the double type were abolished during the year and four water closets were substituted in lieu thereof.

Notices were also served with respect to two privies in High Street, but these have not yet been converted to water closets.

Twenty one nuisances arising from choked drains were abated, and one defective drain was remedied.

DISINFECTION.

Seven houses were disinfected by means of fumigation with formaldehyde tablets in consequence of five of cases of diphtheria and two cases of scarlet fever.

SHIPPING.

The Shipping of the port consists entirely in the export of Coal; there are no imports; consequently most vessels, whether British or Foreign, arriving at the port have discharged at some port on the east coast before coming to Amble for Coal.

The total arrivals during the year were 219 and only about 15 per cent of these arrived directly from foreign ports, mostly from France.

The whole of the vessels inspected were in satisfactory and cleanly condition and no cases of infectious disease were reported or found.

SCAVENGING.

The Scavenging of the Town is carried out by the Council's employees and the bulk of the house refuse tipped on the Braid.

The remainder is tipped in a disused quarry and a quantity is carted to lands for manurial purposes.

SEWERS.

The sewerage system has again been adequate for the requirements of the town and no flooding has occurred.

During the summer months, which were very dry, all the water available was used for flushing purposes.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.

The Dairies and Cowsheds in the District are well provided with an adequate supply of water from the Council's water mains, and are regularly lime washed and kept in a cleanly and satisfactory condition.

The milk from two of the Dairies is delivered within the district and from the remaining two, outside the district.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

With the conclusion of the War more men have been employed in the Workshops and Factories during the year.

No overcrowding has occurred, no contravention of orders have been observed and the whole of the eleven factories and twenty seven workshops have been kept in a cleanly condition.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

There are only three slaughter houses in the town and the slaughtering of the cattle has been much less than in previous years owing to the quantity of imported meat sent into the town.

Two carcasses of imported mutton were condemned as unfit for food, and the whole carcase of a cow slaughtered in the town was destroyed owing to advanced tuberculosis.

The Slaughter houses have been kept in a very satisfactory condition.

WATER SUPPLY.

The summer months were exceptionally free from rainfall and during the month of October, the standage in the service reservoir at Morwick reached a very low level, and it became imperative to prevent all unnecessary waste of water so as to avoid a possible shortage.

The steps taken were so effective that a constant supply was maintained during the whole of the year.

HIGHWAYS AND STREETS.

Owing to the difficulty in obtaining road metal the only resurfacing of roadways carried out, was in Queen Street.

The remainder of the streets which require resurfacing have been left over pending the arrivals of materials.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant.

W. BURTON.

Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910.

1919

Tabular Statement as required by Article V.

Name of District. AMBLE (Urban).	No. of Dwelling Houses Inspected	No. of Dwelling Houses which on Inspection, considered unfit for human habitation	No. of representations made to local authority with a view to closing orders being made	CLOSING ORDERS		No. of Dwellings in which defects remedied without closing orders being made	No. of Dwellings put into fit state for human habitation after closing orders made	GENERAL CHARACTER OF DEFECTS FOUND	REMARKS
				No. of Orders made	No. of Houses vacated at end of each year in consequence				
	36	0	0	0	0	2	0	General Delapidations.	

1919 Sanitary Inspector's Annual Report.

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